

BAPTIST INFORMER

Volume 134, No. 10

Publication of the General Baptist State Convention of N.C., Inc.

October 2011



GBSC THEME

"PREACHING...TEACHING...REACHING"

Matthew 28:19-20

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

GBSC Annual Session

will be held

Oct. 24-26

at

Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church

2020 West Sugar Creek Road,
Charlotte, N.C. 28262,

where the
Rev. Dr. Leonzo Lynch
is pastor.

For details,
contact Baptist
Headquarters
at
(919) 821-7466.

FRUIT BEARERS: Equipped, Empowered and Encouraged

From the Desk of the First Vice
President-at-large
Dr. Nilous M. Avery, II, D. Min.



Dr. Nilous M. Avery, II
Chairman of the GBSC
General Board

To the General Baptist family, together with all the saints throughout the world: Grace and peace to you from God our

Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 1:1b-2, NIV paraphrased). We are called to be fruit-bearers of God through Jesus the

Christ. True fruit-bearers possess inward divine power that transforms lives and overcomes obstacles to ministry.

True fruit-bearers do not falter nor waver in the face of naysayers, doomsday prophets, and ship jumpers. Rather, they fully embrace the reality of being under girded by the unmerited favor of God's grace. Because of God's sufficient grace, abundant mercy, omnipresent power, and blessed provisions, our convention remains alive, well, and full of Jesus' resurrection power!

As we move forward under the anointed leadership of our administration and energetic leadership in our auxiliaries, we must be equipped, empowered, and encouraged to wage spiritual warfare on this Christian journey. In his letter to the church at Ephesus, the Apostle Paul warned the Christian community to never underestimate the

strength and impact of satanic warfare.

In his paraphrase, *the Message*, Eugene Peterson summarizes Ephesians 6:10-18:

"God is strong, and [God] wants you to be strong. So take everything the Master has set out for you, well-made weapons of the best materials. And put them to use so you will be able to stand up to everything the devil throws your way. This is no athletic contest that we'll walk away from and forget about in a couple of hours. This is for keeps, a life-or-death fight to the finish against the devil and his angels.

Be prepared. You're up against far more than you can handle on your own. Take all the help you can get, every weapon God has issued, so that when it's all over but the shouting you'll still be on your feet.

(Continued on page 4)

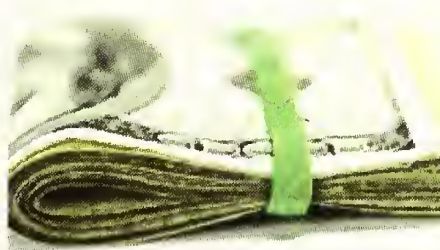
African-American Poverty Rates Highest In Four Years

From Wire Reports

For a fourth year in a row, the African-American poverty rate more than doubled that of non-Hispanic white Americans, according to 2010 data released today by the U.S. Census Bureau. At 27.4 percent, the African-American poverty rate also nearly doubled the overall U.S.

poverty rate—15.1 percent.

"The figures are both startling and very telling," said Rev. Derrick Boykin, associate for African-American Leadership Outreach at Bread for the World. "That the African-American poverty rate is twice as high as the poverty rate for



whites reveals that African-Americans continue to suffer disproportionately from social injustices."

African-American children suffered from poverty at an even higher rate—39.1 percent. Last week, the U.S. Department of Agriculture released annual food insecurity data revealing that 25.1 percent of African-Americans were reported hungry in 2010. Widespread and prolonged unemployment, among other factors, contributed to these high figures. At the same time, real median household income for African-

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ANNUAL SESSION CONVENES IN CHARLOTTE

The 144th Annual Session of the General Baptist State Convention will be held on Monday through Wednesday, October 24-26, 2011 in Charlotte.

The Reverend Dr. Leonzo D. Lynch and Ebenezer Baptist Church are the hosts for this Annual Session. Ebenezer Baptist Church is located at 2020 West Sugar Creek Road and all events connected to the Session will be held at Ebenezer. (The phone number for Ebenezer is (704-598-2219).

The Rev. Dr. Claybon Lea, Jr., pres-



Rev. Dr. Claybon Lea, Jr.

ident of the California Baptist State Convention, will be the keynote speaker at the session. He is the pastor of Mount Calvary Baptist Church in Fairfield and Suisun City, CA. This is the church in which he was baptized,

licensed and ordained to preach. He is only the second pastor in the church's history, having succeeded his late father and church organizer, Rev. Claybon Lea, Sr.

Dr. Claybon is a graduate of

Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA, with a bachelor's degree in religion. He received his Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary in New York City. He also earned his doctor of ministry degree from the United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio.

Under Dr. Lea's leadership, Mount Calvary has experienced phenomenal growth. Dr. Lea, in 2004, led Mount Calvary in a move to the city of Fairfield, to occupy a 48,000 sq. ft. building. In 2005 the church was listed in Outreach Magazine as one of the 100 fastest growing churches in America.

Hotel accommodations for the Annual Session include the follow-

ing:

- Residence Inn Charlotte Concord, 7601 Scott Padgett Parkway, Concord, NC. Prices are \$99-\$109 plus tax. The telephone number is (704) 454-1510.

- Courtyard Charlotte Concord, 7201 Scott Padgett Parkway, Concord, NC with fees from \$79-\$89 plus tax. Telephone number is (704) 453-2600

- Comfort Suites Northlake, 7315 Smith Corners Blvd., Charlotte, NC. Fees are \$75-\$80 plus tax. Telephone number is (704) 598-0478. Group Code: GBSC.

Ushers: An Attitude of Service

Ushers must have the right attitude toward their work. They should remember that church ushering is a sacred duty, a great privilege, and a big job.

First, ushers must realize that before assuming their role in this ministry. They should begin by praying for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Bear in mind that prayer has to be in accordance to His will as given to us in the Holy Scriptures. Prayer is a sincere desire of the heart uttered. Jesus said in Matthew 6:8 "...for God your Father knows



Mr. Charles Dunn
GBSC Ushers
Auxiliary

what things you are needing before ever you ask him." Exodus 2:24-25 reads, "In time God heard their groaning and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. So God looked on the sons of Israel and God took notice." And finally, Matthew 5:23-24 states, "If then, you are bringing your gift to the altar and you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar, and go away; first make your peace with your brother, and then, when you have come back, offer up your gift." I lift these verses from the Holy Bible to you, to emphasize the fact that no person

can pray if he has inward guilt. God knows all about us so we need to pay whatever the price that will enable us to come humble before the throne of grace.

Next, ushers must show the willingness to be corrected by the Pastor and Head Usher. Ushers should always keep calm and have self-confidence. They should not move around more than absolutely necessary. One of the most important purposes of ushering is to win souls to Christ; therefore, we should all realize that we are not our own. We have been bought with a price.

Lastly, ushers should be able to pull themselves together and by every look, word or deed convey friendliness. If ushers will allow themselves to have a loving Christian attitude, they will think

kindly of others. Jesus said to his followers in the Sermon on the Mount, "and if someone under authority impresses you into service for a mile, go with him two miles." This action speaks volumes when it is carried out in the name of the Lord.

As Ushers, we should also be reminded that they are Christian stewards, which means they are consecrated. They should be on the job at all times and carry themselves in such a manner that it will be fitting to be called God's faithful steward. To be this kind of steward is such that a tithe of one's wealth, or a tenth of one's time, or a small amount of one's spiritual nature is not enough, but all of these are needed to be included in a life of stewardship.

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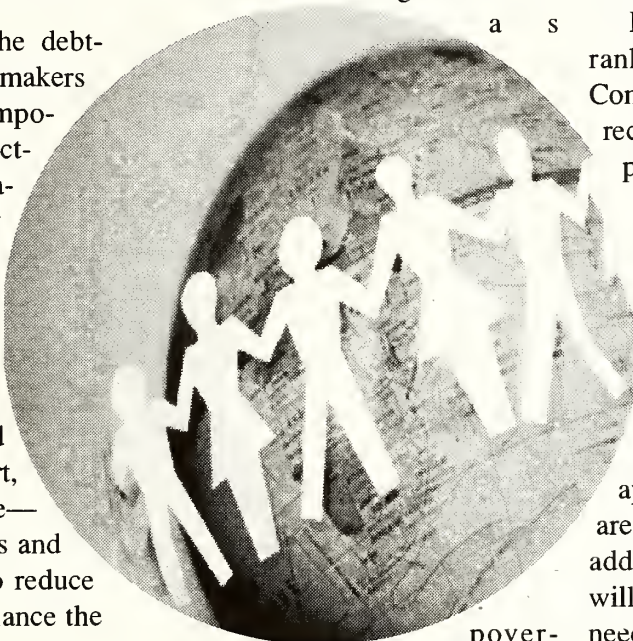
International and Faith Communities Unite to End Hunger

By Bishop Don DiXon Williams

With the signing of the debt-ceiling deal in August, lawmakers made great—albeit temporary—strides toward protecting domestic and international programs for hungry and poor people. Unfortunately, these programs—such as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Head Start, and development assistance—are still at risk as Congress and the administration work to reduce our nation's deficit and balance the budget.

In September, members of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction—or “Super Committee”—met to start figuring out just how to conquer the nation's looming deficit. International and church communities have joined forces to ensure that programs for hungry and poor people around the world don't suffer disproportionate

cuts. Throughout the next few months and beyond, we urge Congress to take a balanced approach to deficit reduction and ensure that funding for key programs such as



poverty-focused development assistance and domestic safety nets remains intact.

Hunger and poverty pose huge challenges around the world as governments of developing countries struggle to maintain political stability, attain economic stability, and secure a seat at the table among international decision makers.

There are nearly 1 billion hungry people in the world, two-thirds of whom live in just seven countries—Bangladesh, China, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, and Pakistan.

Rep. Howard Berman (D-CA), ranking member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, said recently, “It is unconscionable that people are still living under plastic tarps in Haiti ... and that millions of dollars have gone missing in Iraq and Afghanistan.” He's right! Not to mention that it's also in our national interest to help developing nations escape poverty—we just have to modify our approach. Cutting programs that are vital to people in need without addressing underlying problems will get us nowhere. Instead, we need to ensure that our foreign aid reaches the right people and is effective.

Some people believe foreign assistance is a luxury that we cannot afford, but it is really about helping developing countries get on a path toward self-sufficiency. As Rep. Berman stated, “Aid is not a gift. The U.S. provides foreign assistance because it defends our

national interests.” I'd like to take that statement a step further and say that it is our Christian responsibility to care for our brothers and sisters—whether around the corner or across the ocean. They are suffering, and it is our moral imperative to do something about it.

So what can you do? Speak up. Your voice is more valuable now than ever when it comes to the needs of hungry and poor people. In fact, Proverbs 31 tells us to “Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.” Tell your Congress member that you think safety-net and foreign assistance programs should be left alone in the budget debates. A failure to communicate the importance of these programs will result in severe cuts to them. Finally, you can learn more about this effort and join the fight to end hunger by visiting www.bread.org/hunger/budget/.

Bishop Don DiXon Williams is racial/ethnic outreach associate at Bread for the World, and bishop of ecumenical and political affairs at United Way of the Cross Church of Christ, Danville, VA.

"ALL THE WAY"

II TIMOTHY 4: 1-8

What did Paul mean when he said that he had fought a good fight, finished his course, and kept the faith? I like to think that he was saying to me: “I have done my utmost to follow in the footsteps of Christ; I love my enemies, although now they wish to take my life; I have no regrets, even though I must die for my faith. I have fought the good fight.

I have never once, since I met Jesus on the road to Damascus, turned from the path that he pointed out to me, and I have gone every step of the way. I have finished my course.

“And my faith in Jesus, the Christ, whom I once persecuted has never faltered. There have been a countless number of times when all seemed lost, but I knew that he was near, and shall always be, even as he is with me now as I prepare to give my life for his cause. I have



Dr. Ricky L. Banks,
GBSC Second Vice
President

kept the faith.”

As we think about Paul, I wonder whether we Christians today could truthfully say, “I have fought the good fight...” We can do it if love is our chief weapon. We can keep the faith as Christ kept it with his father, and finish our

course by going all the way that Jesus pointed out to Paul. I've seen the lightning flashing And heard the thunder roll, I've felt sin's breakers dashing, Which tried to conquer my soul; I've heard the voice of my Savior, He bid me still fight on- He promised never to leave me, never to leave me alone. No never alone, He promised never to leave me, Never to leave me alone. GBSC we are going all the way.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS October 2011

- 21st Shaw University Fall Convocation, Progress Energy Center, Raleigh
- 21st Shaw University Board of Trustees Meeting, President's Conference Room, Estey Hall, Shaw University, Raleigh
- 24th General Board Meeting, Place TBA
- 24th - 26th GBSC 144th Annual Session

November 2011

- 5th WBH&FMC Youth Evangelism Conference
- 11th GBSC Ushers Officers Retreat
- 12th GBSC Ushers Fall Workshop

December 2011

- 3rd GBSC Ushers Executive Board Meeting, Mount Peace Baptist Church, Raleigh
- 10th GBSC Laymen's Study Commission Central Region, Place to be determined

(Continued from page 1)

Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and salvation are more than words. Learn how to apply them. You'll need them throughout your life. God's Word is an indispensable weapon. In the same way, prayer is essential in this ongoing warfare. Pray hard and long. Pray for your brothers and sisters. Keep your eyes open. Keep each other's spirits up so that no

one falls behind or drops out." General Baptists, let us **PRESS ON!** We are fueled by a faith in God that embraces the past, enhances the present, and envisions the future. We must **PRESS ON** by supporting our conven-

tion and its objectives with our gifts and service. We must **PRESS ON** by endeavoring to worship, work and witness for the Lord. We must **PRESS ON** as true fruit-bearers in the work of God and as prophetic witnesses of God's transforming power.

We can and will fulfill God's mandated ministry through your sacrificial support of the General Baptist State Convention. Your generous prayerful and financial support of our objectives will enable us to invest and benefit greatly in **"Preaching...Teaching...Reaching"** (Matthew 28:19-20). Missions is what we do!

I am challenging all Pastors, Laity, Churches, Moderators, Associations, and those who love the Lord to:

- Be a loyal subscriber & encourage others to subscribe to the Baptist Informer
 - Support our President, Dr. Howard Parker, our Executive Secretary, Dr. Haywood T. Gray, and our auxiliaries.
 - Contact GBSC Headquarters or myself to become and remain a true fruit-bearer to the glory of God!
- "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love to all of you in Christ Jesus. Amen." (1 Corinthians 16:23-24, NIV).*

(Continued from Page 1, Perverty Rates)

Americans declined to \$32,068 in 2010—less than two-thirds the real median income of white households.

Accounting for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) would show 5.4 million fewer people—including 3 million children—living in poverty. The figures would have been much higher without federally funded safety net programs which help keep poverty and food insecurity numbers down as families work to get on their feet. The Joint Select Committee on Deficit

Reduction—or "Super Committee"—met today to determine how to balance the federal budget and reduce the deficit. The committee must identify \$1.5 trillion in federal deficit reductions, and funding is at risk for federal safety-net programs that helped many Americans offset the ongoing impacts of the recession and stay out of poverty last year.

"If it weren't for safety net programs like WIC, SNAP, and others, many more African-American house-

holds would be suffering," added Boykin. "We urge the Super Committee to consider other alternatives to cutting programs that support vulnerable people as lawmakers work to reduce our nation's deficit."

Equally alarming, the Census Bureau report also revealed that the Hispanic poverty rate increased to 26.6 percent, up from 25.3 percent in 2009. The poverty rate for Hispanic children increased to 35 percent.

HELPFUL CONTACTS

General Baptist
State Conv. of NC:
919-821-7466

FEMA (federal aid):
1-800-621-3362

NC Hotline (state aid):
1-888-835-9966

NC Division of Emergency
Management www.ncem.org

NC Cooperative Extension
www.ces.ncsu.edu/disaster

State Dept. of
Health/Human Services
www.dhhs.state.nc.us/docs/hurricane.htm

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911 Reflections: A Dramatic Awakening



The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 were personally devastating to thousands of people. Nearly 3,000 victims died.

The families and friends who lost loved ones so unexpectedly and violently not only had to suffer their own grief, but they also had to endure the unprecedented rehearsing of their personal pain in the public eye for days, weeks, months, and years. Their hurt was merchandised for profit and manipulated for politics. It was a horrible day. And ten years later the United States is called to remember their losses, give thanks for the courageous rescuers and responders, and learn something meaningful out of something awful.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 were publicly devastating to many Americans. Until that day, the majority of Americans lived with the illusion that they were invincible to a substantial attack on American soil. They lived with the false impression that economic might and military strength could insulate the

country from external aggression and assault. The economic, political, and media sectors were co-conspirators in perpetuating this myth of invincibility. But all fantasies eventually yield to reality. It was a dramatic awakening and traumatic experience for America to learn that even the greatest country on earth is vulnerable too.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 were not stunning for some Americans, because some of us know what it is to live under the threat of terrorism. An estimated 645,000 Africans were brought as slaves to what is now the United States by the 19th Century. Vestiges of slavery, segregation, and discrimination continue to frustrate the full participation in life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness for African Americans in the 20th Century. Nearly 110,000 Japanese Americans were imprisoned in concentration camps in the 1940s in the aftermath of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. Although President Reagan apologized for the country and Congress approved financial reparations, Japanese Americans remember what can happen to turn life upside down quickly. The First Nations of what is now the United States endured forced removal of their lands (the Indian Removal Act) and genocide because of the expansionism after the American Revolution. How many people

were murdered and internally displaced cannot be numbered, and their ongoing social distress continues to haunt them many generations removed.

The governmental response to the realization that all of us are vulnerable was violence. A consequence of this violent response to vulnerability is the multiplication of victims who have died resulting from the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Nearly 4,500 US personnel have been killed because of our invasion of Iraq and nearly 1800 US personnel have been killed because of our invasion of Afghanistan. No one knows how many innocent civilians have been killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, but it is certain to be a sizeable multiple of US casualties. There were less than 3,000 deaths because of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. There are more than 6,000 US deaths because of our response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Our national political response to the horrors 10 years ago is the death of more than twice the number of US personnel than victims that perished on that dreadful day. Added to the number of fatalities is the number of injured US personnel. Added to the number of deaths and injuries is the unfathomable amount of money that has been spent on war, its support systems, and alleged homeland

security, without insisting that to whom much has been given (opportunities and wealth) much is required.

If our leaders would have had the wisdom to talk to Americans who were not seduced by the illusions of invincibility, we could have helped. As a member of a community that has known terror on American soil and who is very much aware that the political, economic, military, and media powers could turn on me and mine any time they might choose to do so, and as a Christian leader, I offer the following advice to the American people who are trying to respond to the devastation of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks meaningfully and constructively. I offer this advice with full confidence that, with God, it is never too late to change course. "Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanks giving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).

— Rev. David Emmanuel Goatley, Ph.D.

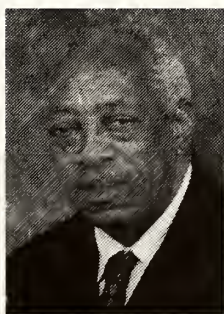
Lott Carey
220 Eye Street, NE, Suite 220
Washington, DC 20002

LAYMEN OUTLOOK: Solidarity with the Savior (Part Four)

The purpose of this discussion is to give emphasis to the Laymen's Sub-Theme: **Spiritual Men in Solidarity with the Savior,** by PREACHING...TEACHING...REACHING... (II TIMOTHY; MATT. 28:19-20)

During the Winter Board meeting of the National Baptist Laymen's Movement, President Dr. Harold Simmons outlined his vision and focus for the year. The Theme: "Men in Solidarity with The Savior." (II Timothy). Emphasis outlined:

- The Character of Spiritual Men —II Timothy 1
- The commitment of Spiritual Men-II Timothy 2



Mr. Richmond Turner

- The Challenge of Spiritual Men- II Timothy 3
- The Charge to Spiritual Men-II Timothy-4

The Sub-Theme of the N. C. Laymen's Movement reflects the focus & emphasis of both the National and GBSC. Men deployed with Christ have to be Spiritual Men. What does it mean to be a Spiritual Man? The word "spiritual" comes from the Greek Word "Pneumatiko," meaning, "One who has an experience with the "Holy Spirit."

Radical Discipleship can only occur through men who apply biblical principles to their lives and come into harmony with the character, commitment, challenge and charge of Jesus Christ

"Solidarity" means unity. The Church is the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ becomes visible to the world in the congregation gathered around the word and communion. Theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote: "That the Church is an articulated Organism." This indicates that each of us as members of the Body is joined together as a unit. Each of us then

has to respond to Christ's call to reflect Oneness or unity in the Body. The essence of "unity" is indicated in John 17:11, when Jesus prayed that the disciples be united in harmony and love as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are united. Further, Jesus prayed for unity among the believers based on the believers unity with Him and the Father. Christians can know unity among themselves if they are living in union with God. Thus, "Solidarity with the Savior is critical.

YOUTH EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

The Woman's Baptist Home and Foreign Missionary Convention of NC will sponsor its 30th Annual Youth Evangelism Conference Saturday, November 5, 2011 from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at the Reidsville High School, 1901 South Park Drive,

Reidsville, NC 27320.

The Conference will be hosted by the Rockingham County Missionary Union under the leadership of President Josephine Neal, along with the assistance of Mrs. Mary Bratcher. They are hard at work preparing for your arrival. Ms. Jewel Dunn, State Youth Supervisor, is

planning a program with music, praising dancing, reflections on evangelism projects, speakers and preaching. She states, "This is a YOUTH program for YOUTH and I am asking parents to bring your youth." While it is a Youth Evangelism Conference, it promises to be a blessing to adults as well.

Last year, the Youth Evangelism Conference was held at the Williamston High School in Williamston, NC under the leadership of Mrs. Nancy Chavis. More than 1,000 youth and adults participated and a 100 plus-member choir blessed us with the songs of Zion.

One of the projects the Youth have adopted is the J.J. Johnson Baptist

Assembly which houses the Youth Bible Camp. Due to a fire four years ago, the camp has been inoperable. Last year, our youth raised more than \$3,000 in the "Quarter Project". This year Ms. Jewel Dunn has again announced the "Quarter Project." The youth are asked to collect quarters in jars and bring to the Youth Evangelism Conference for the J.J. Johnson Baptist Assembly. Every quarter collected will be contributed to the rebuilding project.

For further information, contact the office of the Woman's Baptist State Convention at (919) 833-4823.



LAUNCHING THE NEW YEAR

The theme for the new year (beginning September 1, 2011 through August 31, 2012) will be "A Call to Spiritual Integrity" with the emphasis is on "unity and cohesiveness."

The theme is timely and appropriate given the divisiveness in families, government, schools and churches. A call is extended to each one of us to give particular attention to our behavior and to our

attitude towards one another. If we are to represent Christ, then we must heed the call to take note of these important characteristics of the Christian community.

Jesus said, "That they may all be one even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that You did send Me." Can

we represent Christ? Can we show the world who He is? Can we be the body of Christ that Jesus prayed for in John 17? Let us pray for unity and cohesiveness amongst the sisters and the brothers in Christ thereby enabling us to make a difference in the world around us.



**Dr. Audrey Battle, President,
Woman's Baptist Home and Foreign
Missionary Convention of NC**

Scriptural References:

Psalm 133:1

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

I Cor 1:10 "Now I beseech you brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment."

Eph. 4:3 "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace."

Colors: Black and Silver

SINGLE AND CHRISTIAN: Faith in the Pews

From Wire Reports

GEORGETOWN, Texas (ABP) -- "Why aren't you married yet?" "When are you going to settle down?" "Why can't a pretty girl (or handsome guy) like you find a husband (or wife)?"

Singles sometimes hear these questions from well-meaning friends or relatives, which can make them feel as though they are fifth-wheels -- even at church.

But societal and church changes in attitudes about single adults have helped congregations begin to see the need for ministry to them.

Churches are more accepting of singles than they were 30 years ago," noted Dennis Franck, national director for single adult and young adult ministries for the Assemblies of God.

Society accepts a singles lifestyle more readily today than in

the past. "Society is ahead of the church. It's not always healthy acceptance, but it is acceptance, and that has affected the church," he said.

And singles, primarily "the more mature and emotionally healthy ones," are "integrating into the church more than they used to ... and are getting involved and serving, but there is a large group that is not and that needs an entry point into the church and ministry," Franck added.

He identifies six levels of church sensitivity and targeted ministry to singles—from little sensitivity and no ministry to very high sensitivity, with a targeted, multifaceted ministry overseen by a full-time staffer exclusive to the ministry.

Options for ministry to single adults vary depending on makeup of the broader community, the church family itself, the number of singles involved and available resources, regardless of church

size.

Small churches may feel they don't have the resources or enough singles to offer a ministry geared to them. The Church of the Nazarene suggests churches, even across denominational lines, could partner



Participants at a Texas Baptist single adult conference join in a Habitat for Humanity service project. (PHOTO/Courtesy of Keith Lowry)

to minister.

"We designed (a ministry approach) for churches under 100 (members) because most of our churches are under 100," explained Linda Hardin, single-adult ministry consultant for the Nazarenes. Although some churches might be concerned the multichurch approach would drain singles away from their congregations, that

rarely has been the case. "Some will go for social activities or Bible study at a larger church," Hardin said. "But if they have found a place of ministry and a sense of belonging in the small church, they tend to stay connected with the small church."

Singles ministry doesn't have to be confined to singles but can bridge some additional gaps between people. In addition to two groups for singles, Curtis Baptist Church in Augusta, Ga., offers the Mingles, a group that includes single parents, couples whose spouses don't attend church, and singles and married uncomfortable in traditional singles or couples classes.

Regardless of the form ministry takes—from an occasional special event to a staffed program—churches need to see singles as part of the congregation.

"Provide some way for singles to find a place. It doesn't have to be a full-blown ministry," West said. "But you give up something (in the life of the church) if you don't give some emphasis to single adult ministry."

- Vicki Brown is associate editor of Word and Way.

East Carolina University

Tomorrow starts here.

Center for Health Disparities Research

THE PROCARE STUDY

**Are you an African American male?
Have you had prostate cancer surgery?**

The Center for Health Disparities Research at East Carolina University is conducting a research study entitled Prostate Cancer Recovery Enhancement for African American Men and Their Intimate Partners (PROCARE).

In collaboration with

Duke University Medical Center

Benefits of Participating

- Your participation in this study can help us better understand how to meet the needs of African American prostate cancer survivors, who often experience poorer outcomes compared to other groups.
- You will receive coping-skills training for management of symptoms related to prostate cancer treatment, or you will receive prostate cancer education about symptoms and medical treatment options.
- Compensation
You will receive up to \$150 for your participation.

Do we need to drive to weekly sessions?

No. You and your partner can participate in the study without leaving home. Coping-skills training or prostate cancer education is delivered over the telephone. Speakerphones will be provided at no charge to each couple.

For more information, please contact:

Lisa C. Campbell, PhD
1-888-442-8202 (toll free)
PROCARE@ecu.edu

10-165



LEGO KidsFest coming to Raleigh

The LEGO KidsFest, a giant traveling LEGO expo, is coming to the Raleigh Convention Center October 7 - 9. This hands-on, educational, all-ages LEGO extravaganza features millions of LEGO bricks not to mention lots of construction zones, dozens of life-

sized LEGO models and displays, LEGO Universe and LEGO Games, group builds such as Creation Nation and the Mystery Mural, live LEGO Master Builders, and so much more covering four acres of space. Special offer for friends of the North Carolina Children's Hospital: get \$2 off each LEGO KidsFest ticket when purchasing online at www.LEGOkidsfest.com, use discount code UNC11.

N.C. Children's Hospital is pleased to be the charity beneficiary of LEGO KidsFest Raleigh tour stop. For a suggested \$1 donation, visitors can add a LEGO flower creation to the Garden of Giving. All proceeds go directly to the Hospital.

Excess Weight: Young Adult Risk Earlier Death Later in Life

From Wire Reports

Those extra pounds many people carry at age 25 may shorten their lives, even if they slim down when they're older, according to a University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill study appearing in August in the *Journal of Adolescent Health*.

"People who are overweight as young adults might think they are only hurting their appearance, and believe they'll be fine if they lose the weight when they're older," says study author June Stevens, PhD, chair of the nutrition department in the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health, and AICR/WCRF Distinguished Professor of nutrition and epidemiology. "This study suggests that's not true. That extra weight does have an impact on lifelong health."

The risk of dying was 21 percent higher in those young adults with a higher body mass index and

still 28 percent higher when adjusting for other risk factors such as smoking status, physical activity and alcohol consumption.

"If you made everybody's weight gain over those intervening years the same, there was still an effect of being heavier at age 25 on increased mortality," said Stevens. "BMI in young adulthood matters. You can't just make up for it by losing weight later. You need to be concerned about your BMI throughout your young adulthood."

Stevens also noted that being overweight at age 25 had a greater impact on black women than white women and a greater impact on men than on women. But the impact of obesity early on in life was negligible in black men when adjusting for weight change throughout adulthood.

"I don't really know what's going on there," Stevens said. "I think it's interesting, but we don't have an explanation now."

Over the past 30 years, rates of obesity and overweight have tripled among young men (ages 20-39) and more than tripled among young

women, Stevens said.

"Many studies show that people tend to gain weight when they go off to college, when they get married, and at other turning points in

The study was funded by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. Other authors from UNC were research assistant professor Kimberly Truesdale, PhD; research



their lives," Stevens said. "This study shows us how important it is to avoid every gaining the weight in the first place. We have to concentrate on obesity and overweight prevention. Our lives and our health depend on it."

associate Chin-Hua Wang, PhD, research assistant and Eva Erber, MS, research assistant, all of the nutrition department; and Jianwen Cai, PhD, professor of biostatistics. The study is available at www.jahonline.org.

Baldwin Branch Missionary Baptist Church

Pastoral Vacancy Announcement

Baldwin Branch Missionary Baptist Church, 4047 NC 242 Highway, Elizabethtown NC is currently accepting resumes/employment packages for the position of Pastor. Baldwin Branch is seeking a spirit led pastor to serve the church as God's Shepherd. Pastor is responsible to the church for providing spiritual and administrative leadership of the church, conduct pastoral care to improve the general membership growth, meet the needs of the congregation, and families in the church and community.

Refer to www.baldwinbranchmbcnc.org the bottom of the home page to view a complete job description and contact information.

Pastoral Vacancy

First Baptist Missionary Church of Powellsville, Incorporated
Located in Bertie County (Northeastern North Carolina)
Awaits God's Chosen Leader
For a small flock with a potential for growth

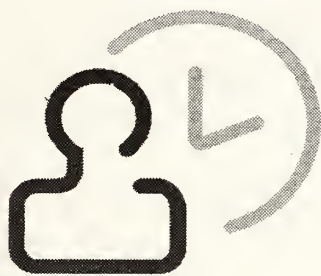
Requirements

- Visionary and trained in setting goals for the continued growth of the church
- Licensed and ordained by the Missionary Baptist Denomination; believes/abides by the Missionary Baptist Doctrines, policies, and Church Covenant, have at least five years of pastoral experience
- Strong administrative skills
- Strong communication skills (ability to deal with people with tact and discretion)
- Willing to become affiliate of the West Roanoke Missionary Baptist Association, Inc.
- Bachelor's Degree in Theology from an accredited college or university
- Visits the sick and shut-in (hospitalized, homes, and nursing homes)
- Willing to support all church program including Sunday School, Bible Study, Prayer Meeting, etc.
- Effective in working with all groups in the church and expected to teach, preach and counsel in word and deed to all age groups in the church
- Willing to submit to a criminal check and credit report
- Implement policies fairly, consistently, respect individuals needs and abilities

The ending date to receive applications is December 31, 2011.
 Please forward all correspondence to:

Search Committee
First Baptist Missionary Church of Powellsville, Incorporated
c/o Deacon James L. Peele
Post Office Box 433
Powellsville, North Carolina 27967

MINISTRY BRIEFS



ORATORICAL WINNER

Tynisha Benjamin, a member of Lewis Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, Fayetteville, North Carolina, was the senior winner in the State Oratorical Contest, 2010. Tynisha is the daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Dwight Benjamin, Fayetteville, NC and a rising freshman at Fayetteville State University in Fayetteville, N.C.



HOST A STUDENT

Pacific Intercultural Exchange (P.I.E.) is looking for families to host international students from one semester to one year.

Host families are eligible to claim a monthly charitable contribution deduction on their itemized tax returns for each month they host a sponsored student.

The students, aged 15-18, are from countries such as Germany, the Former Soviet Union, Venezuela, Argentina, Brazil, Hungary, Korea, Mexico and China. They are English-speaking, have their own money, carry accident and health insurance and want to share their cultural experiences with their new American families. P.I.E. is designated by the U.S. Department of State. For more information, please call 1-866- 546-1402.

Unemployment up across NC counties, metro areas

From Wire Reports

RALEIGH – The unemployment rate in the vast majority of North Carolina's counties and metros rose last month, according to figures included in a report recently released by the N.C. Employment Security Commission.

Since July, the unemployment rate increased or stayed the same in 68 counties and went up in 10 of the state's 14 metro areas. As a result, 58 counties have unemployment rates greater than the current state unemployment rate of 10.4 percent, and the number of counties with unemploy-

ment higher than 10 percent increased to 70 counties last month.

"The increase in unemployment since July is certainly troubling," said Allan Freyer, policy analyst with the North Carolina Budget & Tax Center, "but the long-term trend in the unemployment rate is even more cause for concern. Over the last year, 80 percent of the state's counties and 75 percent of metro areas saw big increases in their jobless rates, and public-sector layoffs aren't helping matters any."

Perhaps even more troubling is the fact that seasonal hiring in K-12 and higher education is largely responsible for cushioning the unemployment rate from even steeper increases, especially across the state's metro areas. In

most regions, the public-education sector—including K-12 school systems, community colleges, and state universities—often lay off instructors, staff, and contractors at the end of the academic year in May, only to rehire many of these workers at the beginning of the new school year in August. As a result, many of the public-sector job increases reported in counties and metros do not represent real hires and only mask the crumbling private-sector labor market.

"If seasonal government hiring is the only factor cushioning the labor market at this point, it's hard to see how eliminating those public-sector jobs through budget cuts will help bring down the unemployment rate," Freyer said.

Election Season: Let's Go to the Polls

From Wire Reports

RALEIGH – It's election season in North Carolina. Across our state some 500 cities and towns are holding local elections in the coming weeks with 1000 public offices up for grabs. Additionally, there are 20 school districts electing school boards, eight bond referenda, five county wide tax referenda and two municipal incorporation referenda all on local ballots.

So many elections, so much voter fraud – right? Well legislative leaders in Raleigh would have us believe that's the case. After all, they've spent a huge amount of time and energy this year pushing an array of "election law reforms" with such titles "restore confidence in elections," and "restore confidence in government."

You may remember their claims: North Carolina was supposedly drowning in "voter fraud" – dead people showing up on the voter rolls, bus loads of non-citizens being hauled to the polls, and college students voting multiple times.

They told us we desperately needed new laws that would require every voter to present a photo ID before receiving a ballot, end the ability to register and vote at the same time and reduce the early voting period window by a week.

But now it's election time in North Carolina. The voter registration deadline ended Friday, September 16th. Early voting began September 22nd for the October 11 primary election. And all these supposedly essential new election laws are still pending in the North Carolina General Assembly

To quote the husband of former U.S. North Carolina Senator Elizabeth Dole, "Where's the outrage?" Where is the public outcry to warn every single locality holding an election this fall about the probability of election fraud?

There is none. Because there is simply no evidence that large-scale voter fraud exists in North Carolina.

But what about the polls that show broad support for voter ID? Surely that means something.

More likely it means that in today's ID encumbered world, most people are indifferent to having to show identification

before voting. That certainly doesn't mean they believe it's necessary.

Even the recent high-profile arrests in Wake County of four people accused of voting twice proved one thing, the current system worked in catching people who allegedly tried to break the law. And a voter ID requirement would not have stopped such behavior.

No, the real issue regarding North Carolina elections isn't voter fraud; it's the damage these restrictive election law proposals will cause.

With North Carolina's record four-million plus voter turnout in 2008, you could perhaps fill a school classroom with the number of "voter fraud impersonation" cases found. Ah, "but what about what about the fraud no one knows about?" say the restriction opponents.

Huh? Somehow that's just not compelling – especially when a report by the State Board of Elections and Department of Motor Vehicles found that more than 400,000 North Carolina voters lack a driver's license and could be disenfranchised by a voter ID law. Of course, it just

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from page 9)

coincidence that these voters happen to fit into demographics more likely to vote Democratic rather than Republican.

Nor is the restriction logic compelling when it comes to repealing the law that allow citizens to register and vote at the same time — same day voter registration. That law enabled more than a quarter million North Carolinians to vote in the 2008 election. No widespread fraud was ever reported. Rather, this law is often cited as a factor in allowing our state to jump from

42nd in voter turnout in 2004 to 15th in 2008.

Finally, the majority party argued that slicing a week off the early voting period was necessary because fewer people used it and it would save money by not having polling places open and underutilized.

The only problem here is that in 2008, more than 700,000 North Carolinians voted in the first week of early voting out of a total of 4.3 million votes cast. That means 16% of the voters voted in week one. Cram those 700,000 voters into the final two weeks and you have a

recipe for either longer lines at the polls or the expense of providing more polling places and voting machines to accommodate the volume.

Not surprisingly, more Democratic voters used same day voter registration and voted early in week one.

So three quarters of a year after they were first introduced at the General Assembly, these restrictive elections law proposals are still lingering. When lawmakers return to Raleigh for yet another special session on November 7th, count on seeing a major push to pass these

proposals into law.

And it will all happen in a session that starts the day before an election — an election, ironically, in which all of the manufactured fears about voter fraud seem to have vanished without a trace.

- Bob Phillips is the Executive Director of Common Cause North Carolina.

EDITORIAL DISCLAIMER: As part of our mission to provide credible and compelling information about matters of faith and community service, the Baptist Informer often seeks a diversity of viewpoints in its columns, commentaries and other opinion-based content. Opinions expressed in these articles are not intended to represent editorial policy and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Informer's staff, GBSC or supporters. We also welcome "Letters to the Editor." Reach us at informeditor@yahoo.com

Advocates seek foster parents in churches

From Wire Reports

THOMASVILLE, N.C. (ABP) -- Hundreds of thousands of families are needed to provide foster care for nearly a half-million children and teenagers who for their own safety cannot continue to live at home.

Some of those families are found in Baptist churches, and those who recruit and train them want to find more.

For many decades, when at-risk children needed to be removed from home for their protection, they were welcomed into group homes and residential campuses established -- often by Baptists -- to care for children orphaned by wars and disease. Government policies, social welfare changes and budget woes have combined to make such residential services a placement of last resort.

So, those century-old institutions are combing their supporting congregations for families they can enlist and train to provide foster care in their homes.

Becky Alley, director of marketing and communications for the Children's Home Society of North Carolina, said they look "for people who are concerned about the welfare of children, who want to be a safe haven in a time of crisis, who

will have them prepared and ready to return to their birth family when their birth family is safe and functioning again."

Foster parenting "is a calling" according to Andrea Walker, intake coordinator for Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina.

"If someone is in it just for a financial stipend, forget it," Walker said. "We're selective. We want to get good quality folks who are going to be in for the long haul."

Keith Henry, executive vice president for programs and services at Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, said he's seen newspaper ads that offer "a little extra money" as an attraction to become foster care parents.

While the stipend for foster parenting is about \$600 monthly, depending on a child's age and behavior level, Henry said his agency "wants to attract families who see this is a ministry, not as a way to earn extra money. We feel going through the churches provides us a built-in filter."

Henry values foster care as a part of his institution's continuum of services, "but we don't feel it's the answer to every child."

Foster parenting often leads to adoption, and about one-fourth of the children in the foster care system are eligible and waiting to be adopted.

The median age of children in foster care is 9.7 years old, accord-

ing to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Most are in care for about a year, but 17 percent are in care for three years or more.

Stacey Darbee, head of the North Carolina Foster and Adoptive Parent Association, also is a foster and adoptive parent.

She and her husband, Osvaldo Franco, built their retirement home and were preparing for an empty nest when they felt clearly and suddenly called to start foster parenting.

They have adopted two sets of siblings, although the younger siblings were not yet born when they adopted the older ones. Their mothers continued their irresponsible behavior, and Darbee knew they needed to adopt the younger babies when they were born.

Myra Griffie, chief operations officer for Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas, said the level of need in children being placed in foster care has increased dramatically in the past two years, as states close facilities dedicated to serving people with mental health and behavioral problems.

There is a distinct and growing need for parents "who can handle children with more severe behavioral patterns," Griffie said.

"With mental health reform, we've had children with very intense needs coming into our program."

Henry said "such children are being pushed into family foster care because of cost," citing the \$4,000 monthly cost of a typical residential program, and the approximately \$600 cost of foster care.

Plus, county departments of social services often can tap federal dollars for certain types of services.

"You don't have to be a hero or someone special to be a foster parent or to adopt," Darbee said.

"You can be a plain-old person and just have enough room in your heart to do it."

She encourages individuals considering foster care to look deeply inside themselves and to make sure their family and support structures outside the family are in place and supportive.

"You're going to need those people," she said. "You can't do it as an island. ... You need that village around you."

Despite the difficulties, she said, "I would not trade my life right now for anything."

- Norman Jameson is reporting and coordinating special projects for ABP on an interim basis. He is former editor of the North Carolina Biblical Recorder.

OCTOBER IS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

From Press Reports

There has been great progress over the last 30 years in identifying risk factors for breast cancer. At this time, researchers agree on many factors that increase breast cancer risk and some factors that lower risk. Some of these risk factors affect risk a great deal and others by only a small amount.

While we have learned a lot, we still do not understand what causes breast cancer to develop at a certain time in a certain person. It's likely a combination of risk factors (many of which are still unknown) that together make cells in the breast become cancerous. But, exactly why a certain combination of factors might cause cancer in one person, but not in another is still unclear. Although there are steps we can all take to lower risk, no one has full control over whether he/she gets breast cancer. Many risk factors are still unknown and many are simply out of our control (such as getting older or having a family history of breast cancer).

However, leading a healthy lifestyle can help lower your risk of breast cancer. And, knowing what factors may increase your risk can help you work with your health care provider to address any concerns and develop a breast health plan that is right for you.

Breast Self Awareness Guide

Susan G. Komen for the Cure® recommends that you:

1. Know your risk

- * Talk to your family to learn about your family health history
- * Talk to your provider about your personal risk of breast cancer

2. Get screened

- * Ask your doctor which screening tests are right for you if you are at a higher risk
- * Have a mammogram every year starting at age 40 if you are at average risk
- * Have a clinical breast exam at least every 3 years starting at 20, and every year starting at 40

3. Know what is normal for you

See your health care provider right away if you notice any of these breast changes:

- * Lump, hard knot or thickening
- * Swelling, warmth, redness or darkening
- * Change in the size or shape of the breast
- * Dimpling or puckering of the skin
- * Itchy, scaly sore or rash on the nipple
- * Pulling in of your nipple or other parts of the breast
- * Nipple discharge that starts suddenly
- * New pain in one spot that doesn't go away

4. Make healthy lifestyle choices

- * Maintain a healthy weight
- * Add exercise into your routine
- * Limit alcohol intake

Women should be aware of how their breasts normally look and feel. Knowing what is normal for you may enable you to note changes in your breast in the time between your yearly mammogram and/or clinical breast exam. Breast self-exam (BSE) is a tool that may help you become familiar with the way your breasts normally look and feel. BSE involves looking at and feeling your breasts. Women who practice BSE should also be sure to get mammograms and clinical breast exams at the appropriate age. BSE should not be substituted for these screening tests. For more information on BSE and screening methods, visit Susan G. Komen for the Cure: Early Detection & Screening.

Komen NC Triangle Events (Participate in an Event)

Whether you are a golfer, a bowler, a chef or a runner, you can contribute to the fight against breast cancer 365 days a year. By participating in the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure® or another Komen event, you become part of a grassroots network that has changed the way the world talks about and treats breast cancer. You can make a difference as you celebrate survivorship; honor those who have lost their battle, and most importantly, raise funds and awareness for the fight against this life-threatening disease.

- Source: Information provided by Susan G. Komen for the Cure, NC Triangle



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

GBSC Annual Session will be held Oct. 24-26

**at Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church,
2020 West Sugar Creek Road, Charlotte, N.C. 28262,
where the Rev. Dr. Leonzo Lynch is pastor. For details,
contact Baptist Headquarters at (919) 821-7466.**

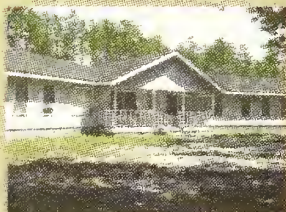
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For details, please call Baptist Headquarters,
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